

community. You are filling a need that needs to be filled. A poll taken last year revealed that 68 percent of people of working age with disabilities are not working and need services to help them get to the next level.

It is a unique program—and one which works.

As a former governor, I understand the concerns of some seeking to limit federal involvement in some areas of our lives. I certainly am all for lowering the federal bureaucracy when it can be accomplished without loss of important services. In fact, at the Department of Education, we have proposed the elimination of 59 education programs and the consolidation of 27 others.

But I also know the cutting for the sake of cutting is not necessarily a positive thing. And the elimination of a federal role when it is necessary and legitimate is bad public policy.

There are certain important responsibilities that we must uphold at the national level in order to ensure continued high quality programs like vocational rehabilitation that are, in effect, run by the states.

We certainly do not want to micro-manage your rehabilitation programs. But we can help to facilitate these important programs and provide the financial support that will keep your vocational rehabilitation programs running effectively.

I am so pleased that in my own home state of South Carolina, I was able to play a role in the development of a strong network of facilities that provide services to mentally and physically disabled people across the state. The program is still growing and helping people from all over the state become contributing members of the economy.

I am pleased to see Charles La Rosa, the South Carolina State Director here today. Charles has continued to provide the leadership that makes this program the success that it is. All across the state, new training centers—which, as you all know, are one of the essential pieces of successful vocational rehabilitation—have been opened, some even rising out of the vacant buildings left by closed car dealerships.

Today, this network—which now has 22 facilities—can boast that no one who wants to participate in the program will have to go farther than 50 miles to get to one of these centers.

And I know that South Carolina is not alone in this success. I can cite success stories of individuals across the nation who were completely dependent upon others for support and who are now, because they have gotten the proper vocational training, entering the world of independent work and living.

Fully three-fourths of the people who have received rehabilitation training throughout the nation as the result of this program, and who are now gainfully employed, report that their own earned income is their primary source of support. This is extraordinary and speaks volumes to those who might characterize this program as just another government handout.

As most people agree—and as we certainly are hearing in the current debate over welfare reform—people do not prefer to be supported by others, whether by government entitlement or family. Most people want, more than anything, to work and be contributing members of society. This program gives millions of individuals that chance.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO JOB TRAINING

Of course, as you all know, vocational rehabilitation is more than just a job referral or search program. It is more than simple employment training. And this is a crucial distinction.

Because, while many individuals need little more than job training and a helpful

boost into the job market . . . a large majority need more assistance, guidance, encouragement and specialized services before they can become independent.

At its core, the vocational rehabilitation program offers a consistent, supportive, individualized, comprehensive treatment that helps to create a productive relationship or partnership between specially trained counselors and teachers, and individuals with disabilities.

At its best, it offers “one-stop shopping”—a means for disabled individuals to get into, or return to, common activity and increased productivity.

75 YEARS OF SUCCESS

Happily, Congress has long understood the value and importance of vocational rehabilitation. Since its creation 75 years ago, this program has been continually reauthorized and expanded with bipartisan support. It has included special features that do not exist in regular job training programs. And it has created additional safeguards and encouragement to coordinate among different agencies so that individuals in need of services may be served efficiently and without delay.

As we all know, these are uncertain times which require stern budgetary measures. But these times also require thoughtfulness and consideration. This is not the time for arbitrary and shortsighted action.

Certainly, there are proposals floating around Capitol Hill these days which arouse my concern in this regard. I am worried that in the budget-cutting, big government-shrinking zeal of these times, some very valuable programs—including vocational rehabilitation—could be harmed.

While I strongly share the sentiments of some of these reformers to improve accountability and provide greater services for more people who need them. . . I do not, as I said earlier, believe in wholesale cutting or consolidating without careful thought and clear justification.

The inclusion of vocational rehabilitation in a broad-based consolidation of job-training programs could have a lasting negative impact on this program, and more importantly, could harm the very people it is intended to help.

The vocational rehabilitation program is the only job training program that includes an eligibility criterion of physical or mental disability. Adequately meeting the needs requires well-trained staff capable of offering a wide array of specialized services. Consolidation with other job training programs could well endanger this vital specialized capacity.

Moreover, coordination between this program and other job training programs does not necessarily require a merging of these programs. States are already afforded great latitude and flexibility in a number of areas. Members of my staff have recently met with some of you who have developed statewide “one-stop shopping” programs that encourage coordination between employment training and vocational rehabilitation programs.

So I hope you understand that our commitment to this program remains as strong as ever. We will, of course, continue our work to improve the program, and continue to help states in their efforts to educate employers about disabilities.

Now I may be preaching to the choir today. But I cannot say how strongly I feel about helping those who can become independent, contributing members of our society to do so. And, if we can break down a few barriers and overcome some prejudices at the same time—so much the better.

When I was Governor of South Carolina, it was one of my greatest pleasures to work, along with my wife Tunky (who was also very active in this area) to expand opportunities in employment and rehabilitation.

I was so pleased recently to learn that in South Carolina, even with a relatively high unemployment rate, individuals who have been trained in the State vocational rehabilitation centers are among the most desired employees. They understand the value of work and supervision, know how to work with their peers and colleagues, and know the value of production.

And ultimately, we can't ask for anything more.

Anthropologist Margaret Meade, wrote, “If we are to achieve a richer culture. . . we must weave one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.” I believe that working together, we can achieve the rich diverse culture that is the ultimate goal of the American experience.

This is the promise of America, the promise of education, and the promise of rehabilitation.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2127) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Chairman, with this legislation before us today we have been asked to make difficult choices. We have been asked to choose between funding for medical research and education, cancer research, and the right to choose. The committee has included regressive legislative language on choice, freedom of speech, and labor law, while decimating preschool, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education. And that is what is wrong with the 1996 Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill.

I applaud and support efforts by the committee to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health [NIH] by 6 percent. It is no secret that I have long advocated such funding levels, particularly in light of the fact that a majority of this same Congress voted to cut NIH in the fiscal year 1996 budget resolution which I opposed.

Biomedical research is an important, cost-effective investment in our Nation's health. Less funding for NIH would have dramatic effects on all Americans, including threatening the health of our citizens, reducing thousands of research projects, reducing potential cost savings from future treatments, and jeopardizing U.S. competitiveness in the biomedical industry.

Over 80 percent of NIH's budget goes to universities, institutes, and medical schools, and to their researchers who are on the verge of significant breakthroughs in treating diseases such as cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's, and AIDS. These funds will continue research which could save millions of lives. I am proud to say that I have fought all efforts to cut NIH, including the levels contained in

this bill. I strenuously opposed the Blute amendment which would have cut NIH by \$235 million.

I am also pleased that this House voted to restore funding for family planning programs. For over 25 years, title X funding has served as a cost effective and vital source of essential health care and family planning services for low-income women. At a time when we are working to reduce unintended pregnancy in America, we should be making birth control more accessible, not less. In addition, we should not penalize community health centers that help these women combat low-birth weights and inadequate nutrition. The reality is that this cut was aimed directly at Planned Parenthood, which the radical right has targeted.

I also approve of increases in breast and cervical cancer screening programs under the Centers for Disease Control, the Jobs Corps, special education programs and vocational rehabilitation services. In fact, I am an original cosponsor of legislation to meet this goal.

However, this legislation contains too many provisions which I believe are terribly misguided and completely unacceptable. For example, the summer jobs program, which provides 6,000 Houston area youngsters with jobs this past summer is eliminated under the Republican proposal. Texas will lose \$66 million in funds for this program next year, and as a result, thousands more young people will be on the streets next summer. More importantly, these teens will lose an opportunity to receive valuable on-the-job training. Texas will also lose 22 percent in vital funds for school-to-work programs to help provide the transition from high school to high wage, highly skilled jobs. This program, which many community colleges in the 25th district utilize, helps train an able work force for the future.

Other programs slated for severe cuts include adult and youth job training programs which are cut 20 percent and the dislocated workers assistance programs which are cut by 30 percent. Any American who loses their job can expect to receive 30 percent less assistance than they may have otherwise anticipated. In southeast Texas, thousands of people in the oil and gas industry have lost their jobs and rely on this safety net to help them back on their feet.

The National Labor Relations Board and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration are significantly cut that they will face serious difficulties in protecting American workers. For example, the National Institutes of Occupational and Safety Health is cut by \$32 million—this cut eliminates all training assistance, including safety training for hundreds of nurses and doctors at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Texas Medical Center in the 25th district.

The bill would repeal the Executive order banning the permanent replacement of striking workers. Under this provision, workers would lose a fundamental right to collective bargaining. Additionally, the legislation would alter the functions of the NLRB heretofore without precedent by requiring unanimous decisions. The cumulative effect of these initiatives is to deny American workers with equal rights under job security and safety laws.

I am deeply opposed to one provision which is part of a stealth campaign to take away a woman's right to choose. While this bill allows the use of State Medicaid funds for an abor-

tion when the life of the mother is at risk, it prohibits the use of such funds to pay for an abortion for women who are victims of rape and incest.

I am also opposed to a provision in the bill which allows institutions to bypass the accreditation process if the standards include training in abortion procedures. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education [ACGME] is a private medical accreditation body responsible for establishing medical standards for more than 7,400 residency programs in this Nation. Under ACGME requirements, no institution or individual is required to participate in abortion training. Any program or resident with a moral or religious objection is exempted.

Congress has never before sought to override private education standards, let alone standards for training in medicine. Those who would take away a woman's right to choose have now turned their assault on both medical schools and doctors.

Some of the most egregious cuts in this bill, however, come in the area of education. Even Republicans would agree that education is the key to opportunity and success in our growing world economy. This bill cuts education programs in the billions of dollars. That is wrong.

In addition to cutting Head Start for our Nation's youngest children by \$3.4 billion, this bill dramatically reduces funding for elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education. Title I compensatory education grants in the bill are cut 17 percent by \$1.2 billion. Harris and Fort Bend counties, which I represent, would lose close to \$15 million in funding to help children improve their reading and math skills, especially in disadvantaged communities.

The bill also proposes the elimination of Goals 2000, which is a voluntary program to help students improve their academic performance. Goals 2000 provides school districts with funds to bring technology like computers to the classroom, to increase teacher training, and to encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's education. Only yesterday, Texas received over \$29 million in Goals 2000 grants to assist in the implementation of our State's education reform initiative which passed the State legislature earlier this year. Without this funding, we will lose an opportunity to build on the progress we have already made in Texas.

For college students, the Republicans have cut student loans and aid by \$9.5 billion. They have eliminated the in-school interest subsidy for Perkins loans, which help millions of Americans attend college. On average, a Texas college student can expect to pay \$5,000 more for college—and they'll start paying before they have even attended a class or moved into their dorm room. At Rice University, which is located in my district, 82 percent of all undergraduates receive student aid—that's 2,170 students who will most likely have to pay more for their education.

One other irresponsible provision in this bill prohibits any recipient of a Federal grant from spending grant funds on political advocacy. This provision is not about lobbying Congress as the Republicans would have us believe, it is about giving nonprofit organizations and individuals the right to express their opinions. This would gag such institutions as AARP, the Red Cross, and the Presbyterian Church, of which I am a member. At the same time, any

Government contractor would still be free to subsidize their lobbying activities with Federal funds. This provision is a threat to free speech.

In the final analysis, while this bill would sufficiently fund programs which are of great national importance, in particular, the national Institutes of Health, when weighed against all of the egregious provisions affecting education, job training, choice, student loans, and free speech, I cannot support it as currently drafted. I urge its defeat while looking forward to preserving what is right about this bill and correcting what is wrong. That is our charge.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. ENID G. WALDHOLTZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2127) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Mr. Chairman, I am voting against the Kolbe-Lowey-Morella amendment to strike language in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill allowing States to eliminate Medicaid funding for abortions for rape and incest because I believe that decisions on the use of State funds should be left to State governments.

However, I also firmly believe that women who are faced with deciding whether to end a pregnancy that is the product of rape or incest should not be forced to base their decision on their ability to pay.

Accordingly, while I respect and acknowledge the right of States to determine how to spend their funds, without Federal mandates, I strongly urge the State of Utah and other States to provide funding for abortions for victims of rape and incest who cannot afford to pay for themselves.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2127) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment offered by the